

MINUTES

MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES 58th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION

COMMITTEE ON FEDERAL RELATIONS, ENERGY, AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Call to Order: By **CHAIRMAN ROD BITNEY**, on March 17, 2003 at 3:00 P.M., in Room 455 Capitol.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Rep. Rod Bitney, Chairman (R)
Rep. Gary Matthews, Vice Chairman (D)
Rep. Dee Brown (R)
Rep. Eileen J. Carney (D)
Rep. Tim Dowell (D)
Rep. Daniel Fuchs (R)
Rep. Hal Jacobson (D)
Rep. Diane Rice (R)
Rep. Jim Shockley (R)

Members Excused: Rep. Brennan Ryan (D)
Rep. John Parker (D)
Rep. Alan Olson, Vice Chairman (R)
Rep. Jeff Laszloffy (R)
Rep. Scott Mendenhall (R)

Staff Present: Glenna McClure, Committee Secretary
Mary Vandenbosch, Legislative Branch

Please Note. These are summary minutes. Testimony and discussion are paraphrased and condensed.

Committee Business Summary:

Hearing & Date Posted: SJ 13, 3/13/2003; SB 220,
3/13/2003; SB 316, 3/13/2003
Executive Action: SB 220

HEARING ON SJ 13

Sponsor: SENATOR KEN TOOLE, SD 27

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

{Tape: 1; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 1 - 3.7}

SEN. TOOLE said that this is a study resolution to look at energy efficiency issues in Montana. Following the heightened awareness of energy conservation in the 1980's, building practices got better in construction of energy-efficient structures. The State Building Codes Division is preparing to update codes. It is a good time to look at these issues. There are other nonprofit groups that would participate in the study which may reduce the costs. This is a study resolution. He indicated that if this study is approved, it makes sense to assign it to the Environmental Quality Council.

Proponents' Testimony:

{Tape: 1; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 3.7 - 13.1}

Patrick Judge, Montana Environmental Information Center (MEIC), said that they are pleased to be here in support of SJ 13. There are efforts around the region to update energy efficiency codes. He indicated that the codes for Washington, Idaho, and New York are a few of the states that recently have changed their standards to be more stringent. The use of enforced standards can make a big difference.

Debbie Smith, Natural Resource Defense Council/Renewable Northwest Project, said that this is a timely and excellent idea. The least expensive form of reducing the use of energy in homes and businesses is using more efficient products in the construction of buildings. They support this resolution.

Sherm Janke, Sierra Club, provided written testimony.

EXHIBIT (feh56a01)

Matt Leow, Montana Public Interest Research Group (MontPIRG), said that they stand in support of this resolution. Until the study is completed it is unclear how much can be done to improve the energy efficiency in our buildings. It is a good idea and will have an economic impact also. He asked that the committee give this resolution a do pass.

Opponents' Testimony: None

Informational Testimony:

{Tape: 1; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 13.1 - 14.1}

Jim Brown, Administrator, Business Standards Division, Department of Labor and Industry, said that the 1991 Legislative Session passed a similar resolution that was essentially a consensus builder which the 1993 Legislative Session acted on. He offered to answer any questions of the committee.

Questions from Committee Members and Responses:

{Tape: 1; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 14.1 - 16.9}

REP. FUCHS asked the sponsor if he had an idea of the cost of this study.

SEN. TOOLE said that his experience is that there is a process within the Environmental Quality Council to complete an evaluation within the existing budget.

REP. FUCHS asked the sponsor if he was familiar with any of the national programs for energy efficiency.

SEN. TOOLE said that he was somewhat familiar. He said that there has been a lot of activity in this area.

Closing by Sponsor:

{Tape: 1; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 16.9 - 17.8}

SEN. TOOLE said that this makes a lot of sense. It is a timely topic and there can be much coordination with other groups to provide education for the public.

HEARING ON SB 220

Sponsor: SENATOR FRED THOMAS, SD 31

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

{Tape: 1; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 17.8 - 24.8}

SEN. THOMAS said that the districts for the Public Service Commission (PSC) have not changed since the 1970's. There were several different options of which he picked Option C which he moved through the Senate. It has the smallest deviation by population and most compact by eyesight. He distributed a copy of the current PSC districts, a copy of the Option C changes, and a table that showed the population deviation.

EXHIBIT (feh56a02)

EXHIBIT (feh56a03)

EXHIBIT (feh56a04)

Proponents' Testimony:

{Tape: 1; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 24.8 - 28}

Greg Jergeson, Public Service Commission, provided a copy of his testimony.

EXHIBIT (feh56a05)

Opponents' Testimony: None

Informational Testimony: None

Questions from Committee Members and Responses:

{Tape: 1; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 28 - 30}

REP. MATTHEWS asked how this change would affect commissioners from other districts.

Mr. Jergeson said that one commissioner is term-limited. Two of the commissioners are up for election in 2006, two are up for election in 2004, there isn't a commissioner in the new district which would be an open seat for the next election.

Closing by Sponsor:

{Tape: 1; Side: B; Approx. Time Counter: 1 - 1.7}

SEN. THOMAS said that **REP. FUCHS** has agreed to carry this bill in the House.

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON SB 220

{Tape: 1; Side: B; Approx. Time Counter: 1.7 - 4.1}

Motion/Vote: REP. SHOCKLEY moved that SB 220 BE CONCURRED IN.
Motion carried unanimously 10-0 with REP. RYAN voting by proxy.

HEARING ON SB 316

Sponsor: SENATOR DUANE GRIMES, SD 20

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

{Tape: 1; Side: B; Approx. Time Counter: 4.1 - 7.6}

SEN. GRIMES said that this bill is actually a followup to a piece of legislation that was carried in a previous session. It provides for exploration credit. It clears up some language in the bill to say that the credit is "for each distinct mining operation" and that it "not exceed a total of \$20 million."

Proponents' Testimony:

{Tape: 1; Side: B; Approx. Time Counter: 7.6 - 8.5}

Shona McHugh, Department of Revenue, said that this bill cleans up two areas in Title 15, Chapter 32.

Opponents' Testimony: None

Informational Testimony: None

Questions from Committee Members and Responses: None

Closing by Sponsor:

{Tape: 1; Side: B; Approx. Time Counter: 8.5 - 9.5}

SEN. GRIMES said that they haven't found a sponsor to carry the bill in the House. He would suggest to have Title 15 available.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 3:45 P.M.

REP. ROD BITNEY, Chairman

GLENNA MCCLURE, Secretary

RB/GM

EXHIBIT (feh56aad)